

However, if we are going to supply enough food for this growing population around the world—9 billion more people in the next several decades—we need agriculture of all types, and that includes organic and conventional and biotech crops. The more nations we can help to feed and bring economic prosperity, the more stable the world will become. That is good for our families, our Nation, and the world, and the world's stability. We can only do that through commonsense policies based on sound science that will allow our producers to do what they need to do to get the job done.

My colleagues—and I see the distinguished chairperson. I will conclude in just about 30 seconds. I am glad she is here. I will just say to my colleagues in the Senate that we should not be putting on lab coats individually and taking action on this amendment. We have a clear scientifically based review process that works. If we pass this amendment, probably in Vermont, California, you will have a requirement; some other States may or may not; in Kansas we will not, and so our State legislature would have no need of putting on lab coats.

At any rate, the FDA has guidance for voluntary labeling, and companies can choose to voluntarily label food and products if their customers want it, if they demand it. Let the consumer decide.

I urge my colleagues to reject this amendment.

I yield back.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, now that the circuit court nomination vote has been scheduled for later this afternoon, I ask unanimous consent that at 10:30 a.m. the Senate resume consideration of S. 954, the farm bill; that there be 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the Sanders amendment No. 965, as provided under the previous order; finally, following the confirmation vote at 2 p.m., the Senate resume legislative session and consideration of S. 954.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AGRICULTURE REFORM, FOOD, AND JOBS ACT OF 2013

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the

Senate will resume consideration of S. 954, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 954) to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2018.

Pending:

Stabenow (for LEAHY) amendment No. 998, to establish a pilot program for gigabit Internet projects in rural areas.

Sanders/Begich amendment No. 965, to permit States to require that any food, beverage, or other edible product offered for sale have a label on indicating that the food, beverage, or other edible product contains a genetically engineered ingredient.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there is now 2 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 965 offered by the Senator from Vermont, Mr. SANDERS. The time is equally divided.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I wanted to thank Senators BEGICH, BLUMENTHAL, BENNET, and MERKLEY for cosponsoring this amendment, as well as support from many environmental and food organizations all over this country. The concept we are talking about today is a fairly commonsense and nonradical idea. All over the world, in the European Union, in many other countries, dozens and dozens of countries, people are able to look at the food they are buying and determine through labeling whether that product contains genetically modified organisms.

That is the issue. In the State of Vermont our legislature voted overwhelmingly for labeling. The State Senate in Connecticut, by an almost unanimous vote, did the same. All over this country States are considering this issue.

One of the concerns that arises when a State goes forward is large biotech companies such as Monsanto suggest that States do not have the constitutional right to go forward; that they are preempting Federal authority. This bill makes it very clear that States can go forward. I would appreciate my colleagues' support for it.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. First, Mr. President, before discussing the amendment, I think it is important to note that this is not germane to the farm bill. Food labeling is properly subject to the jurisdiction of the HELP Committee; therefore, Senator HARKIN opposes the amendment.

While I appreciate very much the advocacy of Senator SANDERS on so many different issues, I do believe this particular amendment would interfere with the FDA's science-based process to determine what food labeling is necessary for consumers. It is also important to note that around the world now we are seeing genetically modified crops that have the ability to resist crop disease and improve nutritional content and survive drought conditions.

In many developing countries we see wonderful work being done by foundations such as the Gates Foundation and others that are using new techniques to be able to feed hungry people. I believe we must rely on the FDA's science-based examination before we make conclusions about food ingredients derived from genetically modified foods. They currently do not require special labeling because they have determined that food content of these ingredients does not materially differ from their conventional counterparts. I would urge a "no" vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE).

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 27, nays 71, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 135 Leg.]

YEAS—27

Begich	King	Reid
Bennet	Leahy	Rockefeller
Blumenthal	Manchin	Sanders
Boxer	Merkley	Schatz
Cantwell	Mikulski	Schumer
Cardin	Murkowski	Tester
Feinstein	Murphy	Udall (NM)
Heinrich	Murray	Whitehouse
Hirono	Reed	Wyden

NAYS—71

Alexander	Enzi	McCaskill
Ayotte	Fischer	McConnell
Baldwin	Franken	Menendez
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Moran
Baucus	Graham	Nelson
Blunt	Grassley	Paul
Boozman	Hagan	Portman
Brown	Harkin	Pryor
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Carper	Heitkamp	Roberts
Casey	Heller	Rubio
Chambliss	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shaheen
Cochran	Johanns	Shelby
Collins	Johnson (SD)	Stabenow
Coons	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Corker	Kaine	Toomey
Cornyn	Kirk	Udall (CO)
Cowan	Klobuchar	Vitter
Crapo	Landrieu	Warner
Cruz	Lee	Warren
Donnelly	Levin	Wicker
Durbin	McCain	

NOT VOTING—2

Flake
Lautenberg

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Ms. STABENOW. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.